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REMARKS

An Excess Claim Fee Payment Letter is submitted herewith to cover the cost of any excess claims added by this Amendment.

Claims 1-35 are all the claims presently pending in the application. Claim 26 has been amended to more clearly define the invention. Claims 33-35 have been added to claim additional features of the claimed invention. Claims 1, 16, 26 and 28 are independent.

It is noted that the claim amendments are made only for more particularly pointing out the invention, and not for distinguishing the invention over the prior art, narrowing the claims or for any statutory requirements of patentability. Further, Applicant specifically states that no amendment to any claim herein should be construed as a disclaimer of any interest in or right to an equivalent of any element or feature of the amended claim.

Claims 1-5, 7-9, 12, 15-18, 21-25 and 27-32 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Hanson (U.S. Patent No. 6,016,336). Claim 6 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hanson, in view of Polcyn, et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,061,433). Claims 10-11 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hanson, in view of Wu, (U.S. Patent No. 6,173,042). Claims 13-14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hanson, in view of Csaszar (U.S. Patent No. 5,970,124). Claims 19 and 26 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hanson, in view of Wolf (U.S. Patent No. 5,737,393). Claim 20 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hanson, in view of Juster (U.S. Patent No. 5,724,406).

These rejections are respectfully traversed in the following discussion.

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I. THE CLAIMED INVENTION

Applicant's invention, as disclosed and claimed (e.g., see independent claims 1 and 16), is directed to a method (and system) for personalizing an interactive voice response (IVR) system to reduce a number of key sequences to reach a desired source of information. The claimed method includes storing a caller profile, accessing the IVR system via a telephone, and retrieving the caller profile to construct a personalized IVR dialogue menu and play out the personalized IVR dialogue menu via the telephone. The personalized IVR dialogue menu is at least one of based on a caller access pattern and configurable by the caller.

Importantly, the personalized IVR dialogue menu includes an option for changing the personalized IVR dialogue menu.

Conventional IVR methods/systems may include an option for updating a caller's usage history. However, such methods/systems do not include a personalized IVR dialogue menu which is played out via a telephone and includes an option for changing the personalized IVR dialogue menu. Such conventional methods/systems, therefore, lack flexibility and sophistication.

The claimed invention, on the other hand, retrieves a caller profile to construct a personalized IVR dialogue menu and play out the personalized IVR dialogue menu via the telephone. Importantly, the personalized IVR dialogue menu includes an option for changing the personalized IVR dialogue menu. Therefore, the claimed invention is much more sophisticated, user friendly and flexible than conventional methods/systems.

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II. THE PRIOR ART REFERENCES

A. The Hanson Reference

The Examiner alleges that Hanson teaches the invention of claims 1-5, 7-9, 12, 15-18, 21-25 and 27-32. Applicant submits, however, that there are elements of the claimed invention that are not taught or suggested by the Hanson reference.

Hanson discloses an interactive voice response system with call trainable routing. Specifically, Hanson discloses using only the "most recent menu" selection made by the caller and playing it back to the user (Hanson at Abstract). Hanson also discloses allowing a caller to elect whether to update his usage history (Hanson at col. 5, lines 1-7).

However, Hanson does not teach or suggests "*said personalized IVR dialogue menu comprising an option for changing said personalized IVR dialogue menu*" as recited in claim 1 and similarly recited in claims 16, 26 and 28.

As noted above, unlike conventional IVR methods/systems which lack flexibility and sophistication (e.g., see Application at Figure 3), the claimed invention plays out (e.g., via the telephone) a personalized IVR dialogue menu which includes an option for changing the personalized IVR dialogue menu (Application at Figures 4 and 6; page 11, lines 17-21). Therefore, the claimed invention is much more sophisticated, user friendly and flexible than conventional methods/systems.

Clearly, these novel features are not taught or suggested by Hanson. Indeed, the Examiner attempts to rely on col. 5, lines 1-10 of Hanson to support his allegation that Hanson teaches a personalized IVR dialogue menu including an option for changing the menu, as in the claimed invention. However, the Examiner is clearly incorrect.

Specifically, this passage merely discloses that a caller may elect to have the service controller 21 update the caller's usage history, or may elect to retain the previous selection. The

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Examiner alleges that “[i]f the caller chooses not to save a usage history, the most recent selection (pattern) presented to the caller the next time the caller accesses the IVR will differ from a situation where a caller chooses to save a usage history ... If the caller elects to save a usage history, the caller has changed the personalized IVR dialogue menu” (Office Action at page 3, line 19-page 4, line 9). However, this is not necessarily correct.

Applicant would point out to the Examiner that the caller cannot elect to update his usage history in Hanson until after he has finished with the IVR system (i.e., at the end of his call). That is, this “election” is not included as part of a “personalized main menu”. In fact, this “election” is not included in any sort of menu at all, but is merely presented to the caller after the caller has finished the call. This is completely different from the claimed invention, in which the option to change the personalized main menu is actually included in the personalized main menu.

Indeed, Hanson teaches that when the caller connects to the IVR system, he is merely presented with the option of receiving the full-length menu manuscript, or being connected in accordance with the caller’s most recent previous choice (Hanson at col. 4, lines 1-54). In other words, the option initially presented to the caller is always the same (i.e., standard menu or most recent call).

Nowhere does Hanson teach that the caller is given an option at this point to change this “menu”. For example, Hanson does not present the caller with the option of “1) standard menu, 2) most recent call, or 3) change menu”. Certainly, the caller is not given the option to select “3” to change the menu so that for example, the next time the caller connects to the IVR, the caller would be presented with the option “1) extension 31-1, 2) extension 31-4, 3) standard menu, or 4) change menu”.

Thus, Hanson is completely different than the claimed invention. For example, the Application explains that a main menu in a conventional system may include a list of options,

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such as "for account balance, please press 1; for account action, please press 2; for rate of return, please press 3" (Application at page 10, lines 19-21; Figure 3). Such menus are burdensome because the caller often has to go through several steps to get to a desired dialogue path. For example, in Figure 3, the caller has to navigate the menu by selecting "2, 2, 2" to get to the "Transfer Fund Balance Menu" 304.

The claimed invention, on the other hand, includes a personalized main menu. For example, as illustrated in Figure 4, the caller may change the menu by adding a shortcut to the "Transfer Fund Balance Menu". Thus, the caller can go to the "Transfer Fund Balance Menu" by selecting "1" in the personalized main menu 402. This saves the caller considerable time and effort (Application at page 12, lines 6-12).

This is completely different than the Hanson system. Indeed, it is clear that Hanson does not even teach or suggest a personalized main menu as in the claimed invention, let alone a personalized main menu that includes an option for changing the personalized main menu, or a personalized main menu which is configurable by the caller.

Further, merely electing whether to update the caller's usage history is not necessarily the same as changing a personalized IVR dialogue menu. For example, the Examiner should consider the situation where the caller in his most recent call, navigates the IVR system by selecting "2, 2, 2". If during the caller's previous call he selected "2, 2, 2", then whether the caller elects to update his usage history is irrelevant. That is, during his next call, the options presented to the caller by the IVR system will be the same regardless of whether the usage history is updated to include the latest call.

Therefore, in this case, the caller is not given the option to change a personalized menu. Thus, contrary to the Examiner's allegations, the caller has no control over the menu presented to him during his next call to the IVR system. Thus, the Hanson system is completely different

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from the claimed invention, where the personalized IVR dialogue menu includes an option for changing said personalized IVR dialogue menu.
Therefore, Applicant submits that there are elements of the claimed invention which are not taught or suggested by Hanson. Therefore, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw this rejection.

B. The Polcyn Reference

The Examiner alleges that Hanson would have been combined with Polcyn to form the invention of claim 6. Applicant submits, however, that these references would not have been combined as alleged by the Examiner and even if combined, the combination would not teach or suggest each and every element of the claimed invention.

Polcyn discloses a system in an automated phone system for obtaining data from sources other than the caller's answer to menu queries, and directing incoming calls to preferred applications based on a customer's usage (Polcyn at Abstract).

However, these references are clearly directed to different matters and solutions and would not have been combined as alleged by the Examiner. Moreover, Applicant respectfully submits that the Examiner has provided insufficient motivation for combining the references as alleged by the Examiner.

Hence, given the completely different problems addressed by the references, let alone those to which the present invention aims to solve, and given the fundamentally different solutions offered by the references to address these disparate problems, there would have been no motivation to combine the references, absent impermissible hindsight.

Moreover, neither Hanson, Polcyn, nor any combination thereof teaches or suggests "*said personalized IVR dialogue menu comprising an option for changing said personalized IVR dialogue menu*" as recited in claim 1 and similarly recited in claims 16, 26 and 28.

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As noted above, unlike conventional IVR methods/systems which lack flexibility and sophistication (e.g., see Application at Figure 3), the claimed invention plays out (e.g., via the telephone) a personalized IVR dialogue menu which includes an option for changing the personalized IVR dialogue menu (Application at Figures 4 and 6; page 11, lines 17-21). Therefore, the claimed invention is much more sophisticated, user friendly and flexible than conventional methods/systems.

Clearly, these novel features are not taught or suggested by Polcyn. Indeed, Polcyn does not even address at least one of the problems (e.g., the large amount of phone keys which a caller must use to navigate an IVR system) which the claimed invention is intended to address.

Applicant notes that the Examiner is merely relying on Polcyn as allegedly disclosing a shortcut based on a most-frequently accessed IVR pattern (which Applicant denies). In other words, the Examiner has not alleged that Polcyn teaches or suggests a personalized IVR dialogue menu which includes an option for changing the personalized IVR dialogue menu.

Specifically, nowhere does Polcyn teach or suggest a personalized IVR dialogue menu which includes an option for changing the personalized IVR dialogue menu. Indeed, the system and method of Polcyn are completely different from that of the claimed invention. For example, Polcyn only allows the caller to go directly to the applications or to listen to the standard menu. This is far different from the personalized menu of the present invention.

Furthermore, any intermediate steps are completely eliminated in Polcyn, which is different from the claimed invention where intermediate steps may still be allowed, if the caller decides to so construct his/her personalized menu. Hence, Applicant respectfully submits that the Examiner is incorrect that combining Hanson and Polcyn would have resulted in the claimed invention (e.g., as recited in claim 6).

Therefore, Applicant submits that these references would not have been combined as

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alleged by the Examiner and even if combined, the combination would not teach or suggest each and every element of the claimed invention. Therefore, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw this rejection.

C. The Wu Reference

The Examiner alleges that Hanson would have been combined with Wu to form the claimed invention of claims 10-11. Applicant submits, however, that these references would not have been combined as alleged by the Examiner and even if combined, the combination would not teach or suggest each and every element of the claimed invention.

Wu discloses a system for enabling personal computer access to an IVR system. The system displays the IVR menu on a computer so that a user can interact with the IVR via a computer (Wu at Abstract).

Further, these references are clearly directed to different matters and solutions and would not have been combined as alleged by the Examiner. Moreover, Applicant respectfully submits that the Examiner has provided insufficient motivation for combining the references as alleged by the Examiner.

Hence, given the completely different problems addressed by the references, let alone those to which the present invention aims to solve, and given the fundamentally different solutions offered by the references to address these disparate problems, there would have been no motivation to combine the references, absent impermissible hindsight.

Moreover, neither Wu, Hanson, nor any combination thereof, teaches or suggests "said personalized IVR dialogue menu comprising an option for changing said personalized IVR dialogue menu" as recited in claim 1 and similarly recited in claims 16, 26 and 28.

As noted above, unlike conventional IVR methods/systems which lack flexibility and

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sophistication (e.g., see Application at Figure 3), the claimed invention includes a personalized IVR dialogue menu which includes an option for changing the personalized IVR dialogue menu (Application at Figures 4 and 6; page 11, lines 17-21).

Clearly, this novel feature is not taught or suggested by Wu. Indeed, Wu does not even address at least one of the problems (e.g., the large amount of phone keys which a caller must use to navigate an IVR system) which the claimed invention is intended to address.

Applicant notes that the Examiner is merely relying on Wu as allegedly disclosing a display to a caller of an IVR menu to reduce a number of key sequences during interactions (which Applicant denies). In other words, the Examiner has not alleged that Wu teaches or suggests a personalized IVR dialogue menu which includes an option for changing the personalized IVR dialogue menu.

In fact, nowhere does Wu teach or suggest a personalized IVR dialogue menu which includes an option for changing the personalized IVR dialogue menu. Indeed, the system and method of Wu are completely different from that of the claimed invention. For example, Wu merely teaches displaying a standard menu on a computer system and allowing a user to select a plurality of destinations that the user wishes to access.

Further, Wu teaches a personal computer (PC) to display a standard IVR menu, and allowing a user to choose one or more destinations on the display. These choices are then converted into access paths to an IVR system. Hence, menu selection is not personalized in the Wu system. Thus, Wu is completely unrelated to the system/method having a personalized menu of the present invention.

Therefore, Applicant submits that these references would not have been combined as alleged by the Examiner and even if combined, the combination would not teach or suggest each and every element of the claimed invention. Therefore, the Examiner is respectfully requested to

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withdraw this rejection.

D. The Csaszar Reference

The Examiner alleges that Hanson would have been combined with Csaszar to form the claimed invention of claims 13-14. Applicant submits, however, that these references would not have been combined as alleged by the Examiner and even if combined, the combination would not teach or suggest each and every element of the claimed invention.

Csaszar discloses a method of directed advertising. Specifically, the method uses a database having information which the consumer desires to know, a database having attributes of the consumer, and a database of advertising messages that an IVR system can deliver to the consumer in response to calls placed to the IVR system (Csaszar at Abstract).

However, Csaszar is completely unrelated to an IVR system and is completely unrelated to the other references.. Hence, given the completely different fields of the references, there would have been no motivation to combine the references, absent impermissible hindsight.

Moreover, neither Csaszar, Hanson, nor any combination thereof, teaches or suggests "said personalized IVR dialogue menu comprising an option for changing said personalized IVR dialogue menu" as recited in claim 1 and similarly recited in claims 16, 26 and 28.

Clearly, this novel feature is not taught or suggested by Csaszar. Indeed, Csaszar does not even address at least one of the problems (e.g., the large amount of phone keys which a caller must use to navigate an IVR system) which the claimed invention is intended to address.

Applicant notes that the Examiner is merely relying on Csaszar as allegedly disclosing inserting an advertisement into the caller's personalized dialogue menu (which Applicant denies). In other words, the Examiner has not alleged that Csaszar teaches or suggests a personalized IVR dialogue menu which includes an option for changing the personalized IVR dialogue menu.

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In fact, nowhere does Csaszar teach or suggest a personalized IVR dialogue menu which includes an option for changing the personalized IVR dialogue menu. Indeed, the system and method of Csaszar are completely different from that of the claimed invention. In fact, as noted above, Csaszar merely discloses a system and method for directed advertising, and is completely unrelated to an IVR system.

Thus, Csaszar fails to teach or suggest a personalized IVR dialogue menu which includes an option for changing the personalized IVR dialogue menu, as in the claimed invention.

Therefore, Csaszar fails to make up for the deficiencies of the Hanson reference.

Therefore, Applicant submits that these references would not have been combined as alleged by the Examiner and even if combined, the combination would not teach or suggest each and every element of the claimed invention. Therefore, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw this rejection.

E. The Wolf Reference

The Examiner alleges that Hanson would have been combined with Wolf to form the claimed invention of claims 19 and 26. Applicant submits, however, that these references would not have been combined as alleged by the Examiner and even if combined, the combination would not teach or suggest each and every element of the claimed invention.

Wolf discloses a script based IVR system. In the Wolf system, when a menu is activated in response to an incoming call, the activated menu queues appropriate events with a script engine for playing a greeting to the telephone line (Wolf at Abstract).

However, these references are clearly directed to different matters and solutions and would not have been combined as alleged by the Examiner. Moreover, Applicant respectfully submits that the Examiner has provided insufficient motivation for combining the references as

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alleged by the Examiner.

Hence, given the completely different problems addressed by the references, let alone those to which the present invention aims to solve, and given the fundamentally different solutions offered by the references to address these disparate problems, there would have been no motivation to combine the references, absent impermissible hindsight.

Moreover, neither Wolf, Hanson, nor any combination thereof, teaches or suggests "*said personalized IVR dialogue menu comprising an option for changing said personalized IVR dialogue menu*" as recited in claim 1 and similarly recited in claims 16, 26 and 28.

Clearly, this novel feature is not taught or suggested by Wolf. Indeed, Wolf does not even address at least one of the problems (e.g., the large amount of phone keys which a caller must use to navigate an IVR system) which the claimed invention is intended to address.

Applicant notes that the Examiner is merely relying on Wolf as allegedly disclosing a telephone interface module and network interface module (which Applicant denies). In other words, the Examiner has not alleged that Wolf teaches or suggests a personalized IVR dialogue menu which includes an option for changing the personalized IVR dialogue menu.

Further, Wolf may disclose building and operating a custom IVR menu. However, Wolf only discloses building and operating a menu via a computer (Wolf at col. 5, lines 10-15). This is clearly shown, for example, in Figure 3 of Wolf, which only shows how a user may use a computer to create a menu.

Thus, nowhere does Wolf teach or suggest a personalized IVR dialogue menu which is played back via the telephone and includes an option for changing the personalized IVR dialogue menu. Therefore, Wolf is completely unrelated to the claimed invention.

Thus, Wolf fails to teach or suggest a personalized IVR dialogue menu which includes an option for changing the personalized IVR dialogue menu, as in the claimed invention. Therefore,

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Wolf fails to make up for the deficiencies of the Hanson reference.

Therefore, Applicant submits that these references would not have been combined as alleged by the Examiner and even if combined, the combination would not teach or suggest each and every element of the claimed invention. Therefore, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw this rejection.

F. The Juster Reference

The Examiner alleges that Hanson would have been combined with Juster to form the claimed invention of claims 19 and 26. Applicant submits, however, that these references would not have been combined as alleged by the Examiner and even if combined, the combination would not teach or suggest each and every element of the claimed invention.

Juster discloses a call processing system for providing a variety of messaging services. In the Juster system, call processing procedures can be changed or adapted to provide a new or different messaging service without rewriting large amounts of software or redesigning the messaging system (Juster at Abstract).

However, these references are clearly directed to different matters and solutions and would not have been combined as alleged by the Examiner. Moreover, Applicant respectfully submits that the Examiner has provided insufficient motivation for combining the references as alleged by the Examiner.

Hence, given the completely different problems addressed by the references, let alone those to which the present invention aims to solve, and given the fundamentally different solutions offered by the references to address these disparate problems, there would have been no motivation to combine the references, absent impermissible hindsight.

Moreover, neither Juster, Hanson, nor any combination thereof, teaches or suggests "said

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personalized IVR dialogue menu comprising an option for changing said personalized IVR dialogue menu" as recited in claim 1 and similarly recited in claims 16, 26 and 28.

Clearly, this novel feature is not taught or suggested by Juster. As noted above, Juster merely discloses a system in which call processing procedures can be changed or adapted to provide a new or different messaging service without rewriting large amounts of software or redesigning the messaging system. Indeed, Juster does not even address at least one of the problems (e.g., the large amount of phone keys which a caller must use to navigate an IVR system) which the claimed invention is intended to address.

Applicant notes that the Examiner is merely relying on Juster as allegedly disclosing a dialogue handler (which Applicant denies). In other words, the Examiner has not alleged that Juster teaches or suggests a personalized IVR dialogue menu which includes an option for changing the personalized IVR dialogue menu.

Thus, nowhere does Juster teach or suggest a personalized IVR dialogue menu which is played back via the telephone and includes an option for changing the personalized IVR dialogue menu. Therefore, Juster is completely unrelated to the claimed invention.

Thus, Juster fails to teach or suggest a personalized IVR dialogue menu which includes an option for changing the personalized IVR dialogue menu, as in the claimed invention. Therefore, Juster fails to make up for the deficiencies of the Hanson reference.

Therefore, Applicant submits that these references would not have been combined as alleged by the Examiner and even if combined, the combination would not teach or suggest each and every element of the claimed invention. Therefore, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw this rejection.

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III. FORMAL MATTERS AND CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicant submits that claims 1-35, all the claims presently pending in the application, are patentably distinct over the prior art of record and are in condition for allowance. The Examiner is respectfully requested to pass the above application to issue at the earliest possible time.

Should the Examiner find the application to be other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at the local telephone number listed below to discuss any other changes deemed necessary in a telephonic or personal interview.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any deficiency in fees or to credit any overpayment in fees to Assignee's Deposit Account No. 50-0510.

Respectfully Submitted,



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CERTIFICATE OF FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION

I hereby certify that the foregoing Response was filed by facsimile with the United States Patent and Trademark Office, Examiner Olisa Anwah, Group Art Unit # 2645 at fax number (703) 872-9314 this 1st day of October, 2003.



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